



RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS (RIRs)

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RUS101018.E

Russia: Whether Russian citizens who have not completed their military service may be issued international passports; restrictions on issuance of international passports (March 2006)

Research Directorate, Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada, Ottawa

According to Article 15.2 of the 1996 law On the Procedure of Exit from the Russian Federation and Entrance into the Russian Federation, a Russian citizen may be temporarily restricted from leaving the Russian Federation if he [translation] "is drafted into military service or sent to alternative service, - until completion of the military service or alternative service" (Russia 15 Aug. 1996; UNHCR 14 Feb. 2006). Referring to this article, a United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) legal officer stated in correspondence to the Research Directorate that "this provision of the law means that a person who is currently undergoing military or alternative civil service will not be able to receive an international passport until he has completed the service. However, before a person is drafted to the service, he should be able to receive such a passport" (ibid.).

Likewise, the deputy director of the Human Rights Watch office in Moscow and the Moscow-based press secretary for the Committee of Soldiers' Mothers (CSM), which works "to expose human rights violations within the Russian military" (CSM n.d.), stated in correspondence to the Research Directorate that Russian citizens who have not been called for military service can travel abroad (ibid. 1 Feb. 2006; HRW 2 Feb. 2006). The CSM press secretary added that Russian citizens for whom a military service order has been issued may not travel abroad (ibid.).

A vice-consul at the embassy of the Russian Federation in Ottawa corroborated this information in 14 February 2006 correspondence to the Research Directorate, and stated that Russian citizens who have not been called for military service may obtain a passport for international travel, even if they expect to be drafted in the future. The vice-consul also stated that Russian citizens who have been called for military service may not obtain a passport for international travel (Russia 14 Feb. 2006).

Although no reference to specific restrictions on the issuance of Russian passports for international travel could be found among the sources consulted, the following requirements governing passport applications was located by the Research Directorate. Besides his or her internal passport, labour record book and four matte photos (Travelmart n.d.c), a Russian citizen must present a list of all of his or her employers for the last 10 years (ibid.; HRW 2 Feb. 2006) as well as his or her position at those places of employment (Travelmart n.d.a). In addition, male applicants between 18 and 27 years of age must present a certificate from their local military enlistment office, or a military certificate if they have already served in the military (HRW 2 Feb. 2006; Travelmart n.d.b; UNHCR 14 Feb. 2006). The Russian passport application form also requests information on whether the applicant has been called for military service or sent for alternative civil service, whether the applicant has been convicted of a crime and whether the applicant has ever had access to "especially important or top secret documents related to state secrets" during study or work (Travelmart n.d.a).

This Response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research Directorate within time constraints. This Response is not, and does not purport to be, conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim for refugee protection. Please find below the list of additional sources consulted in researching this Information Request.

References

Committee of Soldiers' Mothers (CSM) [Moscow]. 1 February 2006. Telephone interview with press secretary.

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Russia. 14 February 2006. Embassy of the Russian Federation, Ottawa. Correspondence from vice-consul.

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_____. N.d.c. "Perechen' Dokumentov." <<http://zagran-pasport.ru/docum.htm>> [Accessed 16 Feb. 2006]

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). 14 February 2006. Correspondence from legal officer.

Additional Sources Consulted

Oral sources, including: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Internet sources, including: *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*, European Country of Origin Information Network (ECOI), Factiva, Global Legal Information Network, Interfax, Legislationline, *The Moscow Times*, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, *The St. Petersburg Times*.

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